

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Human Services Nurse

Class Code: 51072

A. Purpose:

Provides health care for individuals with developmental disabilities or mental illness by assessing needs and implementing appropriate nursing interventions of patients, determining if a physician's attention is necessary and following orders given by a physician to ensure residents' health care needs are met.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

The Human Services Nurse is responsible for nursing duties in a specific area as assigned by a Human Services Charge Nurse, other nursing supervisor, or a program manager and do not have supervisory authority over other professional nursing personnel or nursing practices on a work shift.

Human Services Charge Nurses oversee nursing practices or the activities of personnel on a work shift or area and provides nursing care.

Human Services Nursing Supervisors supervise the activities and professional nursing staff of a major patient unit or several units during a shift and may perform professional nursing duties as needed.

Nursing Unit Managers direct 24-hour patient care and nursing services for one or more patient care units and provide direct patient care only in unusual or emergency situations.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions which may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Completes comprehensive patient assessment and formulates or updates nursing care plans.
 - a. Assesses the patient's physical condition.
 - b. Conducts periodic patient interviews.
 - c. Provides comprehensive patient care according to the individual's treatment plan.
 - d. Conducts group and individual activities appropriate to treatment plans.
 - e. Performs tube feedings and all associated functions with tube feedings.
2. Administers medications and treatments as prescribed by a physician to ensure patients' medical needs are addressed and side effects from medications and treatments are documented.
 - a. Monitors patients' response to medications and treatments and relays data to the physician.
 - b. Explains prescribed medications and treatments to patients and staff.
3. Maintains patient records to maintain adequate and accurate patient data.
 - a. Records pertinent medical or behavioral data.
 - b. Completes special reports and forms.
 - c. Monitors quality and quantity of staff charting.
4. Provides basic medical care, determines if physician's care is needed and necessary, and makes arrangements for obtaining it.
 - a. Evaluates and documents specific health problems of patients, determines what action is necessary and administers medications as appropriate.

- b. Sets up equipment for emergency treatment of residents who injure themselves; prepares residents for sutures by cleaning injured area, cutting hair, etc.
- c. Assesses the physical needs of patients, observes patients for illness or injury, and answers questions of staff regarding behavior of patients.
- d. Instructs staff on cardiopulmonary resuscitation to maintain institutional certification for eligibility for federal funding.
- e. Provides Medication Aide training, certification, and monitoring.
- f. Assists in formulating, implementing, and evaluating social and independent living skills sessions.
- g. Provides input during treatment team meetings to develop a comprehensive treatment plan for each patient.

5. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

May be assigned supervision of Medication Aides; Nurse Aides; Developmental Disability Technicians; Mental Health Aides, Assistants, or Technicians; or other staff involved in direct patient care. And may be assigned work direction over other nursing staff.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenges include evaluating patients' medical conditions to determine their status or if emergency care is needed. This is difficult because residents have either developmental disabilities or mental illness, or both, and may be unable or unwilling to provide information regarding their health status and history. Also challenging is developing innovative methods to help non-compliant clients accept the assessment process and treatment.

Typical problems include determining if complaints require treatment, keeping residents from self-abuse, intervening in crisis situations, evaluating effects of medication on the client's health and/or behavior, locating runaway residents, dealing with behavior problems, and providing the most effective individualized patient care possible while ensuring treatment plan is implemented consistently by the treatment team.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions include screening and evaluating of each complaint and recommendations prior to any follow-up, administering medication on standing orders or determining if a prescription drug is needed, how to resolve minor nursing problems found while making daily rounds, and reordering daily supplies and medication.

Decisions referred include major surgery or hospitalization, prescription of a drug, more detailed or refined laboratory studies, the actual suturing and X-ray evaluation, and interpretation of vital statistics.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with patients to evaluate their medical needs and determine proper treatment and with other medical staff to exchange information and receive treatment orders.

H. Working Conditions:

Works at an institution serving individuals with developmental disabilities or mental illness.

Hazards include exposure to communicable diseases and physical and verbal abuse in the

performance of routine daily tasks. Must be able to lift patients to and from tubs, into wheelchairs, and onto stretchers and may be required to intervene so as to deescalate or limit disruptive or abusive behavior of patients.

I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- professional nursing theory and practices;
- recent developments in the field of professional nursing applicable to the area of assignment;
- clinical procedures.

Ability to:

- keep records and charts;
- follow oral and written instructions;
- communicate information clearly and concisely;
- operate a variety of medical equipment.
- make reports on observations;
- apply general nursing techniques and practices;
- maintain a helpful and sympathetic attitude toward patients;
- deal effectively with patients and staff.

J. Licensure and Certification:

Must be licensed to practice as a registered nurse in the State of South Dakota.